

# **Ezekiel 34 - False Shepherds Contrasted with the True Shepherd; God's Relationship to His Flock; David the Prince; Establishment of the New Covenant, 8 Divine Blessings**

III. Restoration of Israel (Ezek 33:1—48:45)

(2) Present false shepherds contrasted with the coming true shepherd (34:1-31)

(A) Present false shepherds (34:1-10)

(a) Sins (34:1-8)

(b) Condemnation (34:9-10)

(B) Coming true shepherd (34:11-31)

(a) His concern for the flock (34:11-16)

(b) His judgment among the flock (34:17-24)

(c) His establishment of the New Covenant (34:25-31)

## **Ezekiel 34**

(2) Present false shepherds contrasted with the coming true shepherd (34:1-31)

Throughout the OT, Jewish leadership, symbolized as shepherds, are consistently held accountable for leading the nation astray. The shepherd metaphor serves as a powerful illustration of God's care and guidance for His people throughout Scripture (Cf. Gen 48:15; Ps 23). The imagery highlights Yahweh's compassion, justice, and close involvement in Israel's well-being. Every leader of Israel—whether judge, king, priest, or prophet—was called to follow God's example of a shepherd, yet more often than not, they failed to fulfill their responsibilities.

In this chapter, God accuses Israel's shepherds of exploiting their positions for personal gain. Since the false shepherds have failed to protect and nurture the sheep, leaving the flock vulnerable and spiritually starved, God will personally intervene to fulfill these shepherding duties. Verses 1-10 is a condemnation of false shepherds and v11-31 is a promise of the True Shepherd.

(A) Present false shepherds (34:1-10)

(a) Sins (34:1-8)

1 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

1 Then the word of the LORD came to me saying,

1 A message came from the LORD for me, and it had this to say:

1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

- A new oracle from God to Ezekiel, this one in response to the question that underlies Ezek 33: What went wrong? What factors contributed to Israel's downfall?

— The answer that unfolds in this oracle identifies the root cause: Israel's leadership is accountable for leading the nation astray.

2 "Son of man, prophesy against the **shepherds of Israel**. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, 'This is what the Lord GOD says: "Woe, **shepherds of Israel** who have been **feeding themselves!** Should the shepherds not feed the flock?"

2 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock?"

2 "Son of Man, prophesy against Israel's shepherds. Tell those shepherds, 'This is what the Lord GOD says: "Woe to you shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves and not the sheep. Shouldn't shepherds feed the sheep?"

2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?

- "...shepherds of Israel" - used metaphorically in this chapter to describe the leadership of Israel, whether righteous or corrupt. In this context, the woe specifically targets the corrupt leadership.

— Ezekiel was to deliver a divine message to them that contained three key accusations:

- "...feeding themselves" - Yahweh charged the leaders with exploiting the flock for personal gain. A shepherd's primary responsibility was to feed the sheep, yet they completely failed to fulfill this most basic responsibility.

3 You **eat the fat** and **clothe yourselves with the wool**, you **slaughter the fat sheep** without feeding the flock.

3 You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat *sheep* without feeding the flock.

3 You're eating the best parts, clothing yourselves with the wool, and slaughtering the home-grown sheep without having fed the sheep!

3 Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock.

- The first accusation (v2b) is now backed up by evidence:
- "...eat the fat" - the sheep were slaughtered to feed the shepherd's appetite
- "...clothe yourselves with the wool" - the shepherds took the wool for their own comfort
- "...slaughter the fat *sheep*" - they couldn't care less about the flock's survival
- So the first accusation against Israel's shepherds was that they had a complete disregard for the needs of the sheep. They blatantly exploited and fleeced the flock, prioritizing their own self-interest over their duty as shepherds to feed the sheep.

**4 Those who are sickly you have not strengthened, the diseased you have not healed, the broken you have not bound up, the scattered you have not brought back, nor have you searched for the lost;** but with force and with violence you have dominated them.

4 Those who are sickly you have not strengthened, the diseased you have not healed, the broken you have not bound up, the scattered you have not brought back, nor have you sought for the lost; but with force and with severity you have dominated them.

4 You haven't strengthened the weak, treated the sick, set broken bones, regathered the scattered, or looked for the lost. Instead, you've dominated them with brutal force and ruthlessness.

4 The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.

- Yahweh's second accusation against Israel's shepherds was their lack of compassion...

- "Those who are sickly you have not strengthened" - the leaders did nothing to support the weak

- "...the diseased you have not healed" - they were indifferent to those who needed healing

- "...the broken you have not bound up" - they neglected those who were injured

- "...the scattered you have not brought back" - they failed to seek out the scattered

- "...nor have you searched for the lost" - they lacked any effort to recover those who had gone astray

— These five areas of neglect reveal the shepherds as false and unworthy leaders. Instead of showing care and concern, they ruled over the flock with force, imposing harsh and oppressive control. Rather than nurturing and protecting the sheep, they made the sheep suffer.

5 They scattered for lack of a shepherd, and they became food for every animal of the field and scattered.

5 They were scattered for lack of a shepherd, and they became food for every beast of the field and were scattered.

5 "Since they have no shepherd, they have been scattered around and have become prey for all sorts of wild animals. How scattered they are!

5 And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.

- Here, the fourth accusation (v4) against the shepherds is laid out: they allowed the flock to scatter—because there was no shepherd. Israel had leaders in name only, but they provided no real guidance or protection for the people making them useless and ineffective.

— Because of this lack of leadership, the sheep were vulnerable to become food for every animal. The Israelites were subjected to mistreatment and exploitation by other nations, such as the Edomites, who are addressed in Ezek 35.

6 **My flock** strayed through **all the mountains** and on **every high hill**; **My flock** was scattered **overall the surface of the earth**, and there was no one to search or seek *for them*.""

6 My flock wandered through all the mountains and on every high hill; My flock was scattered over all the surface of the earth, and there was no one to search or seek *for them*.""

6 My sheep have gone wandering on all of the mountains, on all of the hills, and throughout every high place in the whole world, with no one to look for them or go out in search of them.

6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

- "...My flock" [2x] - noteworthy how personally Yahweh took ownership of His people and this outcome. Twice in this verse Yahweh accused the leaders of Israel of failing "His" sheep.

- "...all the mountains...every high hill...over all the surface of the earth" - show the extent of this dispersion. The extent of the dispersion described here cannot be applied to the Babylonian captivity, which was only to Babylon.

— Thus, this description points to a far-reaching dispersion that clearly extends well beyond that of the Babylonian captivity. The global scattering described here (v1-10) corresponds to the dispersion that will occur in the middle of the Tribulation period.

7 Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:

7 Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:

7 "Therefore listen to what the LORD says, you shepherds:

7 Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

- In v1, the "word of the LORD" came to Ezekiel; here, it is directly addressed to the false shepherds, delivering an pronouncement of judgment

8 "As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "certainly, because **My flock** has become plunder, and **My flock** has become food for all the animals of the field for lack of a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search for **My flock**, but *rather* the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed **My flock**,

8 "As I live," declares the Lord GOD, "surely because My flock has become a prey, My flock has even become food for all the beasts of the field for lack of a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search for My flock, but *rather* the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock;

8 'As certainly as I'm alive and living, my sheep have truly become victims, food for all of the wild animals because there are no shepherds. My shepherds did not go searching for my flock. Instead, the shepherds fed themselves, and my flock they would not feed!'

8 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock;

- God reiterates His accusations from v4 in preparation for pronouncing His judgment

- "...My flock" [4x] - four times God reiterates that these are "His" sheep. Instead of caring for what belonged to God (the flock), these shepherds had abandoned them. They betrayed their divinely ordained responsibility.

— They were entrusted with the care of God's people, yet they failed to fulfill that sacred duty, thus breaking the trust that was placed in them.

(b) Condemnation (34:9-10)

9 therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:

9 therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:

9 "Therefore, you shepherds, listen to what the LORD says:

9 Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

10 'This is what the Lord GOD says: "Behold, **I am against the shepherds**, and **I will demand My sheep from them** and **make them stop tending sheep**. So **the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore**, but **I will save My sheep from their mouth**, so that they will not be food for them.'"

10 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand My sheep from them and make them cease from feeding sheep. So the shepherds will not feed

themselves anymore, but I will deliver My flock from their mouth, so that they will not be food for them.'""

10 'This is what the Lord GOD says: "Watch out, I'm coming after you shepherds! I'm going to demand my sheep back from them and fire them as shepherds. The shepherds won't be shepherds anymore when I snatch my flock right out of their mouths so they can't be eaten by them anymore.'""

10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.

- "...I am against the shepherds" - the ways in which God was against these shepherds are outlined in three actions:

- "...I will demand My sheep from them" - the shepherds would be held accountable for their failures, and when they were called to give an account, they would be found lacking

- "...make them stop tending sheep" - the shepherds would lose their positions of authority and prominence

- "...the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore" - the selfish abuses of these shepherds (Cf. v2-3) would come to an end

- "...I will save My sheep from their mouth" - Yahweh would ensure that the sheep were no longer exploited to sustain these false shepherds

— Thus, the leaders/shepherds of Israel who were responsible for the people's demise would be stripped of their power and no longer have the opportunity to misuse their authority.

#### (B) Coming true shepherd (34:11-31)

In v11-31, the focus shifts to God's provision of true shepherds for His flock. Having removed the unfaithful leaders, YHWH does not abandon His people. Instead, He appoints genuine shepherds to ensure their care.

This section of the chapter contains approximately 25 promises that God made to His people Israel, emphasizing His commitment to their well-being and restoration. The first step in this process is the regathering of God's scattered flock (v11-16). Before anything else, YHWH promises to reunite His dispersed people, demonstrating His role as the ultimate Shepherd who actively seeks and cares for His own. This is followed by the judgment of the flock (v17-22), the appointment of a new shepherd (v23-24), and the formation of a new covenant (v25-31).

##### (a) His concern for the flock (34:11-16)

11 For the Lord GOD says this: "Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and look after them.

11 For thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out.

11 "This is what the LORD says: 'Watch me! I'm going to search for my flock. I'll watch over them myself.

11 For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, **I, even I**, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.

- In order for a new shepherd to perform his duties, the flock that was scattered due to the mistreatment by the false shepherds would have to be regathered. Yahweh states that He Himself will search for His sheep.

- "...I, even I" [KJV] - *hineini 'ani*, in Hebrew, the personal pronoun "I" is repeated for emphasize. In essence, Yahweh declared, "Here I am!" to demonstrate that He will personally be involved in searching for His scattered sheep.

12 As a shepherd cares for his flock on a day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on **a cloudy and gloomy day**.

12 As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day.

12 Just as a shepherd looks after his flock during the day time while he is with them, so also I'm going to watch over my sheep, delivering them from every place where they've been scattered during the times of gloom and doom.

12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

- Additional description that Yahweh would seek out and retrieve His scattered flock. He promised to rescue them from all the places where they were scattered.

- "...a cloudy and gloomy day" - *veyom 'anan wa'araphel*, this Hebrew phrase contains three nouns. These nouns are often used in Scripture to describe the Tribulation period (Cf. 30:3; Joel 2:2).

— The context suggests that while the scattering described in v1-10 may have begun with the events of 70 AD, its ultimate fulfillment more specifically points to the exile of Israel that will take place in the middle of the Tribulation period, just after the Abomination of Desolation (Cf. Dan 9:27; Matt 24:15-22; Rev 12:13-14).

— This interpretation implies that the false shepherds of v1-10 refer to the leaders of Israel who will sign the seven-year covenant with the Antichrist, thereby initiating the Tribulation

period (Cf. Is 28:14-22). Dan 9:27 implies that in the middle of the Tribulation, the Jewish people will be scattered once more.

13 **I will bring them out from the peoples** and **gather them from the countries** and **bring them to their own land**; and **I will feed them** on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land.

13 I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land.

13 I'm going to bring them out from foreign<sup>4</sup> nations and from foreign lands. Then I'll bring them to their own land and feed them in Israel—on the mountains, in their valleys, and in all of their settlements throughout the land.

13 And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

- Yahweh made three additional promises regarding the regathering of the flock:

- "I will bring them out from the peoples" - regather them from every corner of the earth where they have scattered

- "...gather them from the countries" - He will gather them from every country

- "...bring them to their own land" - He will bring them back to their own land (Israel)

— These three promises demonstrate God's active role in bringing His scattered people back to their homeland in the aftermath of the Tribulation and in preparation for the millennial kingdom.

- "...I will feed them" - once His sheep are back in the land, the focus is on the care of the flock. The provision that will be given to them occurs once they are back in their own land.

14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing place will be on **the mountain heights of Israel**. There they will lie down in a good grazing place and feed in rich pasture on the **mountains** of Israel.

14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the mountain heights of Israel. There they will lie down on good grazing ground and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

14 I'll feed them in excellent pastures, and even the very heights of Israel's mountains will serve as verdant pastures for them in which they'll rest and feed—yes, even on the fertile mountains of Israel!

14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

- "...the mountain heights of Israel" - reflects the image of "the high and lofty mountain" that Ezekiel previously mentioned in 17:22-23; 20:40. In those passages, "mountain" [*har*] is singular while here it is plural.

— This may mean that this verse refers to the Mountain of Yahweh's House, which is prophesied to be the highest peak on earth during the millennial kingdom (Cf. Is 2:2; 27:13; 56:6-8; 66:20; Micah 4:1-2). Ezekiel will elaborate on this mountain in 40:1-4; 45:1-8; 48:8-22).

— On the summit of this mountain will stand the millennial temple (40:5—43:27).

- "...mountains" - the plural indicates that in addition to the central Mountain of Yahweh's House, there will be other mountains in Israel as well. Thus, the entire land will serve as a sheepfold for the Jewish people, the the Mountain of Yahweh's House being the focal point and center.

15 **I Myself** will feed My flock and **I Myself** will **lead them to rest**," declares the Lord GOD.

15 I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest," declares the Lord GOD.

15 I will feed my sheep and give them rest,' declares the Lord GOD.

15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD.

- "I Myself" [2x] - reiterates that this regathering and blessing will be God's doing alone

- "...lead them to rest" - this declaration resonates well with David's words in Ps 23:1-3

16 "I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken, and strengthen the sick; but **the fat and the strong I will eliminate. I will feed them with judgment.**

16 "I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.

16 'I'm going to seek both the lost as well as the scattered, and bring them both back so their broken bones can be set and the sick can be healed. But in righteousness I'll exterminate the fat and the stiff-necked.'"

16 I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

- This verse describes the specific acts of care that the Good Shepherd will perform in addressing the individual needs of each sheep. In contrast to the failures of the false shepherds (v4), Yahweh will:

- "seek the lost"
- "bring back the scattered"
- "bind up the broken"
- "strengthen the sick"

— The very things that the false shepherds failed to do, the Good Shepherd will accomplish.

- "...the fat and the strong I will eliminate" - there will also be an element of divine discipline. The "fat" and "strong" refers to Israel's oppressors, and their destruction will be a sign that God's flock is once again under His protective care.

- "...I will feed them with judgment" - His shepherding will be characterized by righteousness and fairness, a sharp contrast from the exploitation and neglect of the false shepherds.

(b) His judgment among the flock (34:17-24)

**17** "As for you, My flock, this is what the Lord GOD says: 'Behold, I am going to judge **between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats.**

**17** "As for you, My flock, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I will judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats.

**17** "Now as for you, my flock, this is what the Lord GOD says: 'Watch out! I'm going to judge between one sheep and another, and between the rams and the goats.

**17** And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats.

- Yahweh's deliverance of His flock from their unfaithful leaders will not resolve all of Israel's problems. Even though God will be their loving Shepherd, sin will still be present and subject to judgment.

- Yahweh makes two declarations of judgment against the flock (v17,20):

- "...between one sheep and another...between the rams and the male goats" - God will judge between the weak sheep and the strong sheep, the violent men and the weak men.

**18** Is it too little a thing for you to feed in the good pasture, that you must **trample with your feet the rest of your pastures?** Or *too little for you* to drink the clear waters, that you must **muddy the rest with your feet?**

**18** Is it too slight a thing for you that you should feed in the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pastures? Or that you should drink of the clear waters, that you must foul the rest with your feet?

**18** Is it such an insignificant thing to you that you're feeding in good pastures but trampling down the other pastures with your feet? Or that as you're drinking from the clear streams you're muddying the rest with your feet?

**18** Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet?

- "...trample with your feet the rest of your pastures" - after being fed on the best of the pasture, they trampled the rest of the pasture with their feet, leaving it unusable for the other sheep.
- "...muddy the rest with your feet" - after drinking their fill from the clear water, they fouled what was left with their muddy feet making it undrinkable for the rest of the flock.
- It was not enough for the powerful to feed on the best of the pasture or drink the cleanest water. Once their hunger and thirst was satisfied, they destroyed what was left, making it unusable for those who were weaker than them.
- This imagery reflects the behavior of Israel's leaders, who not only led the people astray, but also hoarded resources, failing to share what they no longer needed.

19 But as for My flock, they must eat what you trample with your feet, and drink what you muddy with your feet!"

19 As for My flock, they must eat what you tread down with your feet and drink what you foul with your feet!"

19 My flock is grazing on what you've been treading down with your feet and they're drinking what you've been making muddy with your feet.'

19 And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet.

- The impact of the leader's actions in v18 on God's flock would be that they would have to survive on what the leaders trampled and polluted, struggling to make due with the damaged resources left behind.

**20 Therefore**, this is what the Lord GOD says to them: "Behold, **I, I Myself** will also judge between the **fat sheep** and the **lean sheep**."

**20** Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them, "Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.

**20** "Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says to them: 'Watch me! I'm going to judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep,

**20** Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle.

- The second declaration of judgment is pronounced...
- "Therefore" - because of the sins committed by the leaders of Israel (v18-19)
- "...I, I Myself" - *hineini 'ani*, literally, "Here I am!" This statement emphatically underscores that God Himself would judge
- "...fat sheep" - the strong but unfaithful leaders
- "...lean sheep" - the weak but faithful remnant

21 Since you push away with *your* side and shoulder, and gore all the weak with your horns until you have scattered them abroad,

21 Because you push with side and with shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns until you have scattered them abroad,

21 since you've been bumping aside all the weaker sheep with your backsides and shoulders, butting them with your horns until they're scattered around outside.

21 Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad;

- The unfaithful leaders used their influence to push the weaker members of the flock—the believing remnant—aside. As a result, the flock would be scattered.

— It's important to recognize that this scattering is a direct consequence of the actions of Israel's false shepherds during the Tribulation period.

22 **therefore, I will save My flock**, and they will no longer be plunder; and **I will judge between one sheep and another.**

22 therefore, I will deliver My flock, and they will no longer be a prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another.

22 That's how I'll save my sheep so they won't be plundered any longer. I'm going to judge between one sheep and another."

22 Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle.

- "therefore" - because of the great harm inflicted upon the flock by these leaders, God will do two things:

- "...I will save My flock" - God will regather His scattered flock

- "...I will judge between one sheep and another" - God will judge those responsible for all the suffering (Israel's wicked leaders)

### **David the Prince**

23 "Then I will appoint over them one shepherd, My servant **David**, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd.

23 "Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd.

23 "'Then I'll install one shepherd for them—my servant David—and he will feed them, will be there for them, and will serve as their shepherd.

23 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.

- After judging the individual sheep, God will appoint a new shepherd over Israel

- "...David" - the shepherd who God will appoint to oversee Israel will be David

— Some Christian scholars have interpreted "David" as a reference to the Messiah, the Good Shepherd mentioned in John 10:11-18, who is a descendant of David and destined to be the King of Israel.

— For instance, John MacArthur says that this reference to David is, in fact, a reference "to the greater One in David's dynasty...the Messiah." The Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary makes a similar statement, referring to the figure as "David's greater Son, the Messiah."

— This is a difficult interpretation to believe because nothing in this verse or the entire passage demands or even hints that Ezekiel was not referring to the literal King David.

Applying a literal-grammatical-historical-contextual approach to v23 leads to the conclusion that the shepherd mentioned is indeed David.

— When the OT prophets wished to refer to the Messiah in relation to David, they consistently used expressions such as "Root of Jesse" (Is 11:10), "Branch of David" (Jer 23:5), "Son of David" (2 Sam 7:8,12,14), or "Seed of David" (2 Sam 7:12). None of those expressions are used in this passage. Instead, the name "David" is used plainly and directly, with no evidence in the text that it should be interpreted as symbolically referring to the Messiah.

— In summary, v23 establishes the foundation for a future governmental structure in Israel during the millennial kingdom in which David will play an important role. Yahweh Himself will place David as a leader over His people.

**24 And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken.**

24 And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the LORD have spoken.

24 I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David will rule among them as Prince.' I, the LORD, have spoken this.

24 And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it.

- This verse builds upon the framework of governance over Israel during the millennial kingdom established in v23 by clarifying the relationship between God and David.

- "...I, the LORD, will be their God" - during the millennial kingdom, Jesus Christ will rule not just Israel but the entire world, from Jerusalem, sitting on David's Throne, and He will rule with a rod of iron. During this time, He will be both Israel's God and King.

- "...David will be prince among them" - David, as God's servant, will be a "prince" among "them" (Israel), ruling Israel under Christ's delegated authority. He will be a king over Israel (Cf. 37:24-25; Jer 30:9; Hosea 3:5) and he will be a prince in that he will function under Christ's delegated authority.

- Why is David referred to as a "prince" [*nasi*] rather than "king" [*melek*], a title associated with him throughout Scripture (Cf. 2 Sam 3:31; 13:21; 1 Kings 1:1)?
- Because Scripture is clear throughout the OT that God will establish His Son, Jesus Christ, as King over the entire earth during the millennial kingdom (Cf. Ps 2:6-8; Is 9:6-7; 16:5; Jer 23:5-6; 33:14-17; Zech 14:9; Matt 25:31; Luke 1:30-33).
- David is also referred to by name elsewhere in passages that look to the future restoration of Israel (Ezek 37:24-25; Jer 30:9; Hosea 3:5); See note: **Who is the Prince?** in Ezek 45:8. Also see [Messianic Kingdom: Basis for Belief, Characteristics, Government, Israel's Role, Gentiles](#).
- "...I the LORD have spoken" - as if God needed to confirm this prophecy, these words serve as divine assurance that this prophecy will indeed be fulfilled exactly as spoken.

Messianic references to Jesus Christ as the son of David: Jer 23:5; 30:9; Hosea 3:5; Is 55:3-5; 2 Sam 20:1; 1 Kings 12:16. However, Christ as the Good Shepherd (John 10:14-18) and the "Son of David" completely fulfills the promises found in 2 Sam 7:13; Jer 23:5-6; Micah 5:2-5; Is 9:6,7; Dan 9:25-26. Cf. Matt 1:1; 22:41-45; Luke 1:31-33; John 1:43; 4:25; Acts 2:29-33; 13:22-23, et al. Also Cf. Jer 30:9; Hosea 3:5; Is 55:3-5; 2 Sam 20:1; 1 Kings 12:16.

(c) His establishment of the New Covenant (34:25-31)

- 25** "And I will make a **covenant of peace with them** and **eliminate harmful animals from the land**, so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.
- 25** "I will make a covenant of peace with them and eliminate harmful beasts from the land so that they may live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.
- 25** "I'm going to enter into a covenant with them, one of peace, and I'll eliminate wild beasts from the land so they can live securely in the wilderness and sleep in the forests.
- 25** And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.
- God's care and protection of His regathered people will result in peace for His people
  - "...covenant of peace" - *aka* The New Covenant (Jer 31:31-34). The provisions outlined in Jeremiah also correlate with those in 34:25-31 and 16:60-63 (v60 calls it the "everlasting covenant"). All three passages speak of the same covenant.
  - "...with them" - with who? Based on the context of this entire chapter, with the nation of Israel. Nothing in this passage of the church or any other nation, group, organization, race, religion, ethnicity, or anyone else other than the nation of Israel.
  - The rest of the chapter (v25b-31) list eight specific divine promises included in this covenant:

- "...eliminate harmful animals from the land" - the Jewish people will feel safe enough to sleep in the woods (Cf. Is 11:6-9)

26 I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. And I will make showers fall in their season; they will be showers of blessing.

26 I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. And I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing.

26 I'm going to make them and everything that surrounds my hill a blessing. I'll send down the rain! At the appropriate time there will be a rainstorm of blessing!

26 And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.

- The second divine promise is the blessing of seasonal rain in and around the Millennial Mountain

- The bounty of the Land during the Millennium is described in numerous passages: Is 30:23-26; 35:1-2; 65:21-24; Jer 31:1-6,11-14; Ezek 36:8-15; Joel 2:18-27; 3:18.

27 Also the tree of the field will yield its fruit and the earth will yield its produce, and they will be secure on their land. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bars of their yoke and have saved them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

27 Also the tree of the field will yield its fruit and the earth will yield its increase, and they will be secure on their land. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bars of their yoke and have delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

27 I'll bring fruit to the trees in the orchards, the land will yield its produce, they will live securely on their land, and they will learn that I am the LORD, when I break the bar that has been their yoke and deliver them from the control of those who have enslaved them.

27 And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.

- The third divine blessing will be abundance; there will be no fear of famine or starvation and there will be lasting peace and stability

- The fourth divine blessing will be freedom from oppression. Israel will be freed from all future oppression and bondage.

28 They will no longer be plunder to the nations, and the **animals of the earth** will not devour them; but they will live securely, and no one will make *them* afraid.

28 They will no longer be a prey to the nations, and the beasts of the earth will not devour them; but they will live securely, and no one will make *them* afraid.

28 They will no longer be plundered by the nations, and wild animals will no longer devour them. They will settle down confidently, with nothing to frighten them.

28 And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid.

- The fifth divine promise is that Israel will be freed from the Times of the Gentiles. This period of world history will finally come to an end.

- "...animals of the earth" - or "beasts" of the earth, which represent the Gentile powers that have oppressed Israel and trampled Jerusalem (Cf. Luke 21:24) since Nebuchadnezzar's conquest in 586 BC.

— Once the New Covenant is fully established, Gentile nations will never again conquer Jerusalem.

29 I will establish for them a renowned planting place, and they will not again be victims of famine in the land, and they will not endure the insults of the nations anymore.

29 I will establish for them a renowned planting place, and they will not again be victims of famine in the land, and they will not endure the insults of the nations anymore.

29 I'm going to prepare for them the best of gardening spots. They will no longer live as victims in a land of starvation, nor will they have to bear the insults of the international community.

29 And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more.

- The sixth divine promise is that Israel will be renowned throughout the world. This is a prediction that Israel will become the focus of Gentile attention during the millennial kingdom (Cf. Is 14:1-2; 49:22-23; 60:1-3; 61:4-9; Micah 7:14-17; Zeph 3:20; Zech 8:23).

— They will enjoy complete security, both within and outside their land.

30 Then they will **know** that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people," declares the Lord GOD.

30 Then they will know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people," declares the Lord GOD.

30 That's when they'll learn that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people,' declares the Lord GOD.

30 Thus shall they know that I the LORD their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord GOD.

- The seventh divine promise is the regeneration of Israel.

- "...know" - *yada*, an intimate, personal knowledge; this knowledge goes way beyond intellectual understanding (Cf. Gen 4:1). It refers to a deep, experiential relationship with Yahweh.

— Israel will truly know their God by means of their salvation as it will be a lived experience. As a result of this knowledge, all Israel will fully become the people of God.

31 "As for you, My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, you are mankind, *and* I am your God," declares the Lord GOD.

31 "As for you, My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God," declares the Lord GOD.

31 'And as for you, my sheep, the flock that I'm pasturing, you are mankind, and I am your God,' declares the Lord GOD."

**31** And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord GOD.

- The eighth divine promise relates to Israel's position during the millennial kingdom. The relationship that Israel will enjoy with God will mirror the relationship that Adam had with God before the Fall.